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Work–Life Balance among Married Women Employees

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ABSTRACT: Over a period of time women accomplished remarkable progress in every walk of life and made a noteworthy mark in the respective fields. But there is no significant change in performing the role of home maker. In majority homes, the women still does household work, cooks, takes care of the family members and manages the house. With increase in demands at work place and at home, the work- life balance of women employees is at stake. Work-life balance refers to the divergence between the work place demands and the demands of personal life. When either side becomes unbalanced for extended periods of time, the effect is likely to be visible in unhealthy symptoms (fatigue, stress, depression, etc.). Therefore it is a high time for employers to draw out strategies and help the women employees to enjoy their work and live life to the fullest. Indian women today have great opportunities specially with their empowered status they are provided with appropriate education, best job opportunities and lots of responsibilities to perform and when a girl in India gets married this responsibility doubles up which also include the duties that are associated with being a good home maker, to take care of the whole family and to ensure that there is a proper work and life balance.

KEYWORDS: Women, Work-Life, Household, Employees, Opportunities and Family.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the traditional era, the women were confined to household work like cooking, washing, cleaning, taking care of children, etc. They were considered as home makers and were deprived of the right or opportunity to go outside home. But now the story is different. Apart from home maker role, they also have a significant role to engage even outside the home. With the increase in cost of living on one hand and the improved education and employment opportunities on the other hand, both husband and wife started working and many families became dual earners. The growth of higher education has improved job prospects for women and resulted in the move from stay-at-home mothers to thriving professional women. Over a period of time women accomplished remarkable progress in every walk of life and made a noteworthy mark in the respective fields. But there is no significant change in performing the role of home maker. In majority homes, the women still does household work, cooks, takes care of the family members and manages the house. With increase in demands at work place and at home, the work- life balance of women employees is at stake. Work-life balance refers to the divergence between the work place demands and the demands of personal life. When either side becomes unbalanced for extended periods of time, the effect is likely to be visible in unhealthy symptoms (fatigue, stress, depression, etc.). A lack of synchronization between domestic life and work life causes great personal and financial hardship, both to the individual and the company. In the competitive era, organizations are under competitive pressure to achieve high productivity and require employees with healthy work-life balance as an employee with good work-life balance will be in a position to contribute more towards the organizational growth and success. Therefore it is a high time for employers to draw out strategies and help the women employees to enjoy their work and live life to the fullest. Indian women today have great opportunities specially with their empowered status they are provided with appropriate education, best job opportunities and lots of responsibilities to perform and when a girl in India gets married this responsibility doubles up which also include the duties that are associated with being a good home maker, to take care of the whole family and to ensure that there is a proper work and life balance.

Working mothers have been proved to be beneficial for a child's overall development, especially cognitive development. Working women does dual role in office and home. She plays a major role in development of children and contribute an important part in the betterment of the family. Children become smarter and active in comparison to those having non-working mothers. They become independent and more responsible. Working women can also provide financial help to their families and also help in raising their living standards. Thus to lead a comfortable life and to attain self satisfaction, women are working real hard. Continuous support from their families and friends will help them in gaining the balance between their personal and professional responsibilities. There is no doubt about the fact that women are very strong and that they can pull off a lot of work burden be it related to their personal or professional life but at times these working married women in the rush of handling everything forget to take care of themselves and this

leads to high levels of stress that can further lead to severe health problems in them. As per a recent research health problems in women are mainly attributed to conflict in duties that they perform at home as well as at workspace.

Work-Life Balance is not „one single ultimate experience“ but a series of individual experiences unfolding over time. For working women balancing a challenging career with life outside work is a complex task. Working women have to maintain a balance between family, career, health and society. In the current scenario it is very important that what place a woman is holding in the society. There is no single model that is right for everyone and no single approach is right for anyone for their whole life. Women in India have struggled to establish an identity and create a space for themselves in their workplace. The biggest worry of modern times is that women have more time saving devices but less time. Women are very stressed by life which seems to keep speeding up on them. They work longer hours and take less holidays. They are sadder than ever before. They are more contactable than ever before, often interrupted during family dinners or other important events by a mobile phone ring (Chakravarty 2000). More women are now looking for flexibility in their work lives and are willing to sacrifice more in order to take care of their home lives. Perhaps this is a sign that women no longer feel as if they have to “do it all” the career, the husband, the kids and are willing to make some tough choices that result in sacrifices in one area of their lives. On the other hand, maybe this is a sign of gender roles at home regressing to previous norms where women were expected to be the caregivers and men were expected to work.

Today’s women are mostly in full time services and are working 8 hours per day and 5 days in a week minimum and are confronted by increasing workload every day. So, most of them carry work and responsibilities to home but balancing between these two complex situations in the present day fast life requires talent, tact, skills and cautions. In the traditional society, women’s role was naturally limited to the family. Since she was the bearer of children, she was fully occupied with her responsibilities as a mother and homemaker. This was no small feat, since the traditional household may be described as both a production and a consumption unit. Man’s responsibility was to provide the household with raw materials, which were then converted by the woman into consumable products or conditions by means of rudimentary methods and tools (Rajasekhar 2013). Work-Life Balance, is not just about women juggling a home and family-although that is certainly an important part of it. That is also about adjusting working patterns so that everyone, regardless of age, race or gender, can find a rhythm that enables them more easily to combine work with their other responsibilities or aspirations. Life is a balancing act, and it is safe to say that in current fast paced society everyone is constantly looking for the right Work-Life Balance. It is imperative to find the true meaning of Work-Life Balance. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations due to rise in education level.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Being a recent move, there have been various researches on different aspects of the initiative ranging from the economical to social and ethical dimensions. Some of these researches retrieved through internet searches have been reviewed here.

Doble, Niharika and Supriya, M.V (2010) have highlighted Work-Life Balance across genders and found that both men and women are experiencing work life imbalance. Though after Liberalization, many Indian organizations have been introducing various Work-Life Balance practices like flexi times, part time work, and provision for child care facilities which are facilitated in various developed countries it is found that imbalance still exist among men and women in every organization.

Kadam (2012) defines Work-Life Balance is a subject, in which increasing interest in academic literature, legislation and public disclosure. Work- Life Balance is a broad concept including proper prioritizing between „Work“ such as career and ambition, on the other hand and „Life“ such as health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development. Work-Life Balance means, meaningful daily achievement and enjoyment in each of four life quadrants work, family, friend and self.

S, Padma & M.S. (2013) defines the term Work-Life Balance (WLB) is attracted by all including the individuals and Corporate all over the world. Though many have proposed various definitions, there is no accepted definition for this term. WLB is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement between the multiple roles of a person’s life. It is a person’s control over the responsibilities between their workplace, family, friends and self. It is a comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employee’s primary priorities at their work place and at their private life. There are various people like family members, friends, supervisors, peer group and others involved in every person’s life. The support gained from them will play a key role in leading a comfortable life journey. On the basis of above literature

researcher concludes that the Work-Life Balance is not just to have a balance between work and life but it is an appropriate mix of all the roles played by working women from typical housewives to successful corporate leaders.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study of the objectives and testing of hypothesis is dependent primarily on the reliable measurement of the variables and secondly on the methods and procedures applied for deriving conclusions. The women employees in Darbhanga town constitute universe for the study. The researcher selected women employees working in various sectors like banking, health care and education sector and industries as the sample frame. The sample size considered for the study is 240 working women employees selected from various professions and jobs. The sample respondents include doctors, teaching faculty, software engineers, customer relationship officers, bank employees, etc. Simple random sampling method is used for the present study to ensure that different strata i.e. different sectors are adequately represented in the sample. Both primary and secondary data are collected for the purpose of the study. The survey method is used to gather primary information for the study. The required data is collected from the sample respondents with the help of a questionnaire designed for the purpose and through personal interviews also. The secondary data is collected from books, journals, magazines, websites, etc.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Table: 1
Mean Score of Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance of Women Employees in Different Sectors

Nature of the sector	VS	S	N	DS	VDS	Total score	Mean score	Rank
Education	6	32	17	5	0	219	3.65	5
Health care	14	24	18	4	0	228	3.86	3
Banking	11	41	4	4	0	239	3.98	1
Industries	5	41	9	5	0	226	3.77	4

Note: (VS-Very Satisfied, S-Satisfied, N-Neutral, DS-Dissatisfied, VDS Very Dissatisfied).

It is observed from table 1 that based on the mean scores calculated on a five point scale, Banking sector has topped the list followed by health care, industries and education sector. Education sector was down the list. It implies that employees from banking sector are relatively more satisfied with work-life balance and employees from Education sector are least satisfied.

Table : 2
Levels of Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance

Sector	Satisfaction with work-life balance							
Education	38	63	17	28	5	9	60	100%
Health care	38	63	18	30	4	7	60	100%
Banking	52	86	4	7	4	7	60	100%
Industries	46	77	9	15	5	8	60	100%

Their work-life balance in the select service sectors. Greater part of the banking sector respondents (86%) reported highest level of work-life balance. It is followed by Industries sector respondents (77%) occupying the second place. The finding is in accordance with study revealed that respondents from the banking sector enjoyed better work-life balance as compared to the respondents from other sectors. 63% of Education sector respondents and 63% of Health care sector are highly satisfied with work-life balance. As far as the respondents who have low level of work-life balance.

Table: 3
Ability to Balance Work life and personal life

Work-Life Balance	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total
Strongly agree	65	32.5
Agree	80	40
Neutral	63	31.5
Disagree	20	10
Strongly disagree	12	6
Total	200	100

Table-3 depicts whether respondents of select service sectors of the study are able to balance their work life and personal life. It is clear from the table that out of 240 respondents, 72.5% respondents say they are balancing their work and personal life. 31.5% are neutral in their response and 16% respondents articulated that they were unable to balance their work-life.

V. CONCLUSION

Women workforce is increasing and their contribution to the organizations is also considered to be valuable. It is very necessary for the organizations to acknowledge women employees by providing more appropriate work-life balance measures for them. Striking a healthy work-life balance is imperative for all the employees irrespective of the industry to which they belong. It is the joint responsibility of the employer and the employees to ensure strong work-life balance that can bring in fruitful results to organization as well as employees also. Quality of life for a woman means to have a proper work life balance and achieving this balance is indeed the most difficult thing for a woman in the present scenario. Therefore, imbalance in the work and family of a women can affect the quality of life and cause high levels of stress, mental illness and ultimately reduce her efficiency at work and happiness at home. From various researches it has been proved that a women can gain highest level of quality of life only by maintaining a substantial amount of balance between work and life and the very need of the hour, in order to maintain such balance are the Work-Life Balance Programs developed specially for working married women and so these programs can substantially help a women in optimally allocating time to work and allowing her to do more work in less time and dedicate more time to family too. Generally leading the dual career role, women face the dilemma of work family conflict and thus put down her own interest over the family happiness. Companies should adapt Work-Life balance policies which help in the improvement of employee morale and job satisfaction.

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